

**Comintern 7th World  
Congress Part 12: For Peace and  
Defence of the Soviet Union**

Andre Marty  
1935 London: Modern Books  
20p.

**FOR PEACE!  
FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE  
SOVIET UNION!**

(Speech at the Seventh Congress of the C.I.)\*

By ANDRÉ MARTY

**I. THE TWO POLES OF WAR AND PEACE IN EUROPE**

I shall begin by reminding you that on the eve of the last imperialist war we in France used to compare Europe to a powder magazine in which maniacs were walking around with lighted torches, in Jaurès' words. To-day the whole world is the powder magazine, and it is the fascist criminals who are walking around with lighted torches.

In our opinion, four essential factors characterise the international situation at the present time:

1. *The unprecedented economic crisis, which for seven years has held the imperialists by the throat, by that very fact compelling them to increase their efforts to conquer new markets.*

2. *The coming of fascism to power in Germany, with all that this event implies in the way of chauvinist incitement and intensified preparation for war.*

3. *The development of the Soviet revolution in China, and parallel with it, Japan's predatory war in China, also aimed at the Soviet Union.*

4. *The final and irrevocable victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union. Hence a constantly growing contradiction between the two systems: Socialist and capitalist.*

And thus it is that *hotbeds of war*, some of them already aflame, are appearing all over the imperialist world which is in full decline.

They can be characterised as follows, in fact:

*In Europe*, it is German imperialism which is obviously the major fomentor of war at the present time.

\* Abridged.

In Africa, it is Italian imperialism against Abyssinia. The present time that was played by the competition for Morocco on the eve of 1914.

In Central and South America, the imperialist bandits are engaged in a bitter struggle which is from time to time settled by the guns of the smaller countries.

In Asia, where the cannon of Japanese imperialism, the chief fomentor of war, have already been thundering for three years, the great imperialist pirates: the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy would already have dismembered the vast country of China, were it not for the formidable power of the Soviet Union for peace, were it not for the might of the Chinese Red Army.

I shall comment upon only one very limited point in these manifold contradictions and threats of war, viz., that concerning Europe, and more particularly, the most advanced capitalist countries of Europe. For example, I shall not deal, in particular with the Balkan problems.

### *Hitler Fascism—The Major Fomentor of War in Europe*

1. The Treaty of Versailles satiated—for a time—certain victor imperialisms, particularly France and Great Britain. But as a result, German imperialism, "this young and powerful bird of prey," has been made even hungrier: it was, in fact, deprived of big industrial regions, such as Alsace-Lorraine, Upper Silesia, Danzig, etc.; all its colonies were taken from it. The marked monopolist development of Germany after the war, the growing contradictions between its productive capacity and its possibilities for exporting capital were bound to activate its imperialist and annexationist tendencies.

At the present time the tremendous means of production of a country possessing a powerful industry compel German imperialism to make every effort to regain and conquer the markets without which it must suffocate. And that is what it is doing.

2. On the other hand, these very bandit treaties of 1919, which intensified Germany's imperialist ambitions still more, offered the fascists an excellent argument for fanning a frantic chauvinism. They ascribed all the misery and all the frightful suffering of the German proletariat and the German toilers to Versailles and French imperialism.

How easy it was for the fascists to excite the national hatred of the masses of the people when Germany had to pay over tremendous stocks of raw materials and such precious means of production as wood and coal, when it delivered locomotives, railway cars and ships! How easy it was to whip up the chauvinist wave when the starving German toilers, whose children were deprived of the barest necessities, saw milch cows, fruit trees and poultry turned over to the conquerors!

The Hitler fascists are compelled to want war, because they are the most reactionary agents of German imperialism, and because they must satisfy the intense nationalist current that they have themselves evoked, developed and intensified. Peace means the death of Hitlerism. That is why they are again raising the question of the partition of Europe and of the world. That is why they are insolently celebrating the 65th anniversary of Krupp at the present time. That is why they glorify the "merits" of this "cannon king," this king of slaughterers. That is why Germany's enormous production apparatus is entirely devoted, at the present time, to the frenzied preparation of monstrous massacres for which its general staff asks only a few months of preparation. That is also why the terror is being redoubled against the revolutionary proletarians of Germany, against our heroic sister party, against all resistance to the Nazi dictatorship, in order to safeguard the rear.

### *Against Whom Are the Hitlerite Preparations Primarily Aimed?*

It is true that Austria remains one of the points most coveted by Hitlerism; it is true that fascist Germany has not decided to allow French imperialism to digest Alsace-Lorraine, Morocco, Syria and the Cameroons in peace. It says so, and it is making its preparations.

But the chauvinistic fascist propaganda that cries out: "A people without room," adds "Room in the East." "Towards the East," declared Hitler in *My Struggle*. "Towards the East," declared Rosenberg in London. The East means not the gigantic landed estates of the Prussian landowners, but the Soviet Union. It is there above all that Hitler fascism sees the easiest field of expansion. *It hopes thus to kill two birds with one stone*: first, to gain new markets, new points of support; and second, to strike at and crush the land of the proletarian revolution, the Land of Socialism, the Soviet Union. Thus, in this war against Socialism, it hopes to be able to group the greatest number of imperialist powers around it more easily.

Now, what does the Soviet Union represent? In May, 1922, Lenin said that:

"To-day, it is chiefly through our economic policy that we influence the world revolution. . . . In this sphere, the struggle has been carried into the world arena. Once this problem is solved, we shall certainly and definitely conquer on an international scale."

It was indeed the policy of expropriating the expropriators that even in 1919 attracted the sympathy of innumerable toilers towards the Soviet Union. To-day, this current is powerful in another way. It is impossible to prevent the workers and the toilers of the capitalist world from asking why there is poverty in their country, and well-being in the Soviet Union. It is impossible to prevent them from realising that it is the overthrow of capital's régime that is at the bottom of the difference between the two systems. It is impossible to prevent even the intellectuals and the scientists from turning towards the Soviet Union, since they see the unprecedented advance of science and culture in the Land of the Soviets and their own miserable condition in the capitalist countries, except for those engaged in war research.

Finally, at a time when oppression of the colonial peoples is constantly growing in ferocity, the free federation of 185 peoples in the Soviet Union is the hope of millions of colonial slaves.

Thus, the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. constitutes a gigantic magnet whose power of attraction upon the toilers of all the world is steadily growing. It is by far the most powerful explosive that the romantic revolutionaries of long ago could ever have dreamed of to blow up the régime of exploitation and hunger.

A few more years and the mere portrayal of the well-being and the joy of life in the new Socialist world, the mere propaganda by pictures and by delegations of toilers come to visit the Land of the Soviets, will evoke forces that no dyke of the old imperialist world will be able to hold back any longer.

The imperialists of the whole world know this, particularly their most chauvinist and most reactionary elements, that is to say, the fascists. That is why these vultures, these hired slaughterers of big capital, are animated by the most savage hatred of the Soviet Union. That is why the most fiendish

among them, the Hitlerites, see in the destruction of the Soviet Union a way out of their catastrophic economic situation, the satisfaction of the needs of German imperialism, as well as the destruction of their most dangerous enemy, the Land of the Soviets. The Land of the Soviets, whose very existence is a constant appeal to millions of proletarians crushed under their bloody and bestial fascist dictatorship. That is why Hitler Germany is the principal fomentor of war and the instigator of armed warfare against the Soviet Union in Europe at the present time.

## II. THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS FOR PEACE

I should like to demonstrate how and why the *Communist International* and the *Soviet Union* are formidable strongholds of peace.

*The Communist International is fighting for peace and intends to employ all its forces to maintain it.*

Why?

1. *Because war involves slaughter and nameless sufferings for the toilers, and profits and monstrous super-profits for capitalism.*

For the workers and peasants 1914 to 1918 meant twenty million dead, thirty million maimed, ruin and devastation of their homes. But for the Krupps and the Schneiders, the Bethlehem Steels and the Vickers—billions in surplus profits never before attained. In the United States, for example, the du Pont Company (explosives) figured its war profits in 1918 at 246,000,000, dollars, or 1,130 per cent. of the pre-war profits! Numerous scandals throughout the world, especially in France, Germany and the United States, have sufficiently proved that during the last world war, while soldiers guilty of fraternisation were shot, the exploiters—for whose interests they were sent to the slaughter—sold "the enemy" the raw materials and the machines it lacked to continue the war against their own country!

And more recently did not the Senate Inquiry Committee in Washington prove in 1934 that Skoda—controlled by Schneider—furnished large quantities of arms and munitions to Hitler to establish his dictatorship? Did not the same Inquiry Committee show the Aircraft Company, the du Pont Company, etc., at work supplying Hitler with large deliveries of airplanes and explosives?

Do we not see at the present time the Suez Canal Company cynically calculating that the transit of 120,000 Italian soldiers to Abyssinia yielded it £90,000 in additional profits? This explains the interest of its shareholders in having the largest possible number slaughtered in Abyssinia so that as many troops as possible may pass through the canal, causing dividends to rise.

2. *War is necessarily military dictatorship over the whole country.*

Over the whole country and not merely in a few regions as in 1914-18. It has been well established, in fact, that the war of to-morrow will be a total war. Employing aerial gas bombardment of big industrial centres, it will abolish the old distinction between civilians and the military, between the front and the rear.

Hence, imperialist war would mean the destruction of the vestiges of democratic liberties, wherever they still exist; it would mean the suppression of the rights of association, of free assembly, of freedom for the labour Press, already so restricted. It would mean the destruction of all workers' organisations, and a free field for the fascists. It would mean a tremendous increase in the exploitation and oppression of the working class, and requisitions at low prices in the countryside. It would be a régime of forced labour for the colonial peoples. To an extent a million times as great as in 1914-18, it would mean the atrocious rule of the gallows, of torture and murder by the fascist gangs.

That is why we Communists, *stubborn defenders of whatever is left of democratic liberties*—these positions conquered in bitter struggle by the working class, which allow the working class to defend its interests better—are likewise stubborn defenders of peace.

As for the countries of fascist dictatorship, war there would be veritable slavery for the toilers, aggravating still more the frightful régime they are subjected to, and exhausting them in war production to the ultimate limits of human endurance.

3. *Who paid and who is paying the costs of the imperialist great war of 1914-18?*

Those who were sent to the slaughter by the bourgeoisie and by the abominable treason of Social-Democracy—the toilers, victors or vanquished, are still paying to-day all the costs through their reduced wages and crushing taxes.

Even those whom the bourgeoisie wanted to win over, the *ex-service men*, these victims with mangled bodies, with burned

lungs, with blinded eyes, now see their meagre pensions cut still more in all capitalist countries.

While the capitalists, on the contrary—"victors" and "vanquished"—whose dividends sky-rocketed during the four years of slaughter, have invested gigantic sums in new modernised enterprises, and are making exorbitant profits from them in spite of the crisis.

In short, the poor have sacrificed everything, and are paying the expenses of a war that served only the interests of their exploiters. The rich have made enormous profits in this gigantic enterprise of destruction.

Imperialist wars are profitable only for the exploiters, for the capitalists; they bleed, they annihilate the proletarians, the toiling masses of all countries.

That is why the Communists are the most stubborn fighters for the defence of peace—"because they have no other interests than those of the working class."

4. *Can the Communists want an imperialist war?*

For many years, however, the Social Democrats have accused us of wanting a war between the imperialists, or even against the Soviet Union, in order to have the revolution grow out of it, as they said. As if the Communist Parties throughout the world did not have energetic campaigns to their credit in their struggle against imperialist war!

As if the Communist International, issued from the struggle against the war and against anti-Soviet intervention, had not fought vigorously and successfully for peace during the course of its glorious past! Particularly in 1923, when the occupation of the Ruhr brought Europe to the brink of war, and when the Second International rejected our proposals for a fighting united front! The Social-Democrats have levelled this slander against us. As if our French Communist Party had not achieved brilliant successes in the struggle against imperialist war.

Our French Party has in its ranks many of those who all through the last slaughter, and particularly in 1917 and 1918, participated in and led the great revolutionary strikes and the great military mutinies of those red years.

As if our French Party did not count the following as its most glorious pages, precisely in this field of struggle against war at the directives of the C.I.: 1921, with the struggle against the call to the colours of the conscript levy which "had to seize Germany by the throat"; 1923, against the occupation of the

Ruhr, and for the fraternization of the French soldiers with the German proletarians; 1925, with the general strike of October 12 against the war in Morocco and in Syria, and the support of the peoples of these countries in their fight for freedom; and 1927-28, with the struggle against the French reactionaries' threats of war.

These facts answer the self-seeking libels of those who supported their own imperialism at each of those periods. They answer the lies of those who claim that we want war, by calling to mind what our Party did to have the French soldiers sent into the Ruhr and the Rhineland fraternise with the toilers of Germany against their militarists and their warmongers, resulting in the arrest of our Political Bureau, with Marcel Cachin at its head, for "endangering the external security of the state."

In no country of the world have the Communists spared their strength, their liberty, or their lives in this struggle against the threats of imperialist war.

#### *The U.S.S.R.—A Force for Peace*

Some renegades, with the miserable Doriot at the forefront, are trying to injure the Soviet Union by repeating exactly what Hitler says against it. They accuse it of wanting war.

As if the Soviet Union could be anything else than a force for peace!

Lenin quoted this phrase of Clausewitz's: "War is the continuation of politics by other means." Now, what can the policy of an imperialist state be? Evidently the policy that is fixed by the only law ruling it, the law of the quest for profits, i.e., the policy of imperialist expansion which fatally leads to armed conflicts.

Now the quest for profits does not exist in the Soviet Union, because it is the Land of Socialism. If a capitalist country had constructed one-hundredth part of a Magnitogorsk or a Turksib, the speculators would have made millions! That is why the U.S.S.R. by its very economic and social structure cannot want any expansion, any war.

Capitalism has disappeared in the Soviet Union. The general aims of its policy are fixed in a clear and precise manner both by the Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and by the Congress of Soviets. They are published, broadcast over the radio, printed in millions of copies. And our great Comrade Stalin does not let an occasion pass for calling them to mind. He himself sees to it that they are realised. These aims are the steady raising of the well-being of the whole toiling

population, the building of classless society, the advance towards Communism, with our old motto as its highest goal: "To each according to his needs—from each according to his abilities."

That is why the Soviet Union, all of whose forces are concentrated upon these basic goals, cannot help wanting peace, which assures it the opportunity of continuing its tremendous social transformation, unique in the history of mankind.

By its Socialist construction the Soviet Union aids the world proletariat, aids the colonial peoples. That is why it has become the fatherland of the toilers of the whole world, the free federation towards which so many oppressed peoples are turning, that is why it is so violently hated by the imperialists of all the world.

Yesterday Ercoli called to mind the decisive steps of this peace policy, starting with the appeal by the Second Congress of Soviets, "To All Peoples and to All Belligerent Governments," the very night power was seized, November 7, 1917.

Moreover, has not the Soviet Union often demonstrated its desire for peace? I shall content myself with adding two arguments to those given yesterday by Ercoli. Was not the Soviet Union the first to make a concrete and precise proposal for universal, simultaneous and controlled disarmament in 1927 at Geneva? After this was rejected, did it not again on several occasions make proposals for partial disarmament, always received with sarcasm?

Soviet ambassadors have been assassinated: Vorovsky in Switzerland, Voikov in Warsaw; others have been expelled like bandits, even in Paris. The imperialists arrest Soviet consuls and Soviet citizens, as, for example, the railway men of Manchuria. Armed forces have violated the territory of the Soviet Union on several occasions. What country would have tolerated such provocation? Not a single one! The Bey of Algiers' blow with a fan in the face of an envoy of the French Government sufficed as a pretext for putting Algeria to fire and the sword for fifty years. The pretext for France's declaration of war upon Germany in July, 1870, was found in the fact that King William had considered it needless to receive the French Ambassador one evening!

Here then is a proved fact: the interests of the proletariat in power in the Soviet Union lie in peace; it could not be otherwise. And because this is also in the interest of the toiling masses of all the world, the Soviet Union has made enormous sacrifices for the cause of peace, sacrificing even the lives of its best sons.

### III. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND FRANCE

Thus, the major centre of war in Europe is among the Hitler fascists—the major force for peace is in the Soviet Union, the Land of Socialism.

Comrade André Marty then defined the position of the French bourgeoisie in the present situation. His argument may be summed up as follows:

*The French bourgeoisie is not interested in war at the present time. The victory it won in 1918 has enabled it to accumulate immense riches, and has ensured it hegemony in capitalist Europe.*

*Now, it well knows that it defeated its German rival only after 52 months of war and with the considerable aid of the most powerful imperialisms in the world. It realises that it would be difficult to resist successfully a fascist Germany powerfully equipped, whose population is half as large again as its own.*

*On the other hand, the ruling classes of France realise that there exists a formidable power, the Soviet Union, which has become one of the most highly industrial powers in the whole world, and hence possesses a corresponding military might. This power wants the maintenance of peace and has proved it. Moreover, the proletariat and the masses of the population of France sympathise profoundly with the Land of the Soviets, and see in its peace policy a rampart of general security. Thus France turns towards the Soviet Union.*

André Marty continued:

Is it not logical therefore, that the Soviet Union, which puts the defence of peace above everything, should at once sign a pact of mutual assistance with capitalist France?

#### (b) *Should Imperialist Contradictions be Utilised?*

True enough, the interests that lead French imperialism to peace have altogether different aims than those of the Soviet Union. But why could not the latter support states that are interested in peace for other reasons than itself? We French Communists know very well that the aims of French imperialism do not have in mind the interests of the toiling masses, but merely the maintenance of its power. But we also know very well that the toiling masses of France and of the whole world consider peace one of their dearest possessions, and that is why our Political Bureau took a public stand, from the very start, for the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance.

Certain renegades criticised the pact of mutual assistance, this *understanding for a very precise end between the proletarian government and an imperialist government*. As if the interests of the labouring masses required that the U.S.S.R. place itself in "splendid isolation"! Over and over again, Lenin and Stalin explained to us, however, how the Land of the Soviets won out during the years 1918, 1919 and 1920:

1. Because of the absolute devotion of the workers and peasants to their Soviet régime, because of the absolute devotion and the heroism of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

2. Because of the aid of the international proletariat.

3. Because the imperialists were divided among themselves.

Not a worker would ever understand the Soviet Union's pursuing a policy that welds all its enemies into a single bloc against it. The proletarians understand very well, as Lenin emphasised, the duty of the proletarian state to make use of the contradictions between the bourgeoisies of different countries. And that is why the Soviet Union was perfectly right in signing the pact of mutual assistance with French imperialism.

But here these same renegades declare: "Only the action of the proletariat is a true guarantee of peace." That is correct and that is obvious.

Unfortunately, we are not yet strong enough in the capitalist countries to guarantee peace. Despite the magnificent and heroic struggle of our sister party, who can guarantee that the German proletariat could restrain Hitler's arm? No one, obviously. Thus, the toilers can only approve the Soviet Union's casting its tremendous weight on the scales to guarantee peace through its pacts with France and Czechoslovakia, pacts open to all, which therefore threaten no one.

No matter how limited the duration of such pacts may be, no matter how precarious their application by bourgeois states may be in the case of an anti-Soviet war, they are nevertheless important ways of hindering to a certain extent, a new imperialist world war. And thus they serve the interests of the international proletariat and of the toilers of all countries.

#### (c) *Who is Attacking the Pact?—The Opponents of the Struggle for Peace*

This consistent peace policy of the U.S.S.R. obviously does not satisfy everybody. In France, especially, important capitalist groups have not abandoned hope of resuming the attempt at colonisation, foiled in 1918-20, by overthrowing Soviet power

through force of arms. Their fascist agents, those who make the noisiest display of a spurious patriotism, bellow against the Land of the Soviets, at the same time striving to multiply their negotiations with Hitler, from whom they expect material and monetary aid in France. Let me first say that this campaign, inspired by Hitler, indicates how much the pact of assistance's hampering the war policy of the Nazis. And they have already attacked the pact violently.

And along comes the sorry renegade Doriot, who states in an interview with a bourgeois newspaper, *Le Petit Journal*, that:

"It is inadmissible for the policy of a big French party to be dominated by the diplomatic needs of a foreign country, no matter what one it is (When he says a foreign country, he means the Soviet Union—A. M.) I dread this Russian alliance, because I believe that Russia is interested, or thinks it is interested, in war, while we want peace. Peace must be sought for by the most logical means, Franco-German rapprochement."

Doriot thus calls for rapprochement with the horrible executioners of the German proletariat, against the Soviet Union.

The results of such a policy would be the consolidation of the Nazi dictatorship and the establishment of a powerful bloc against the U.S.S.R.; it would mean immediate war. The French fascists, Jean Goy and Robert Monnier, who dined with Hitler and promptly called for a Franco-German Rapprochement, did not however, dare to go as far as Doriot. And here is the man, who has the effrontery to want to participate in the organisation of a "New Zimmerwald," as he puts it, with a few renegades of his stamp and with deluded Socialist militants. It is easy to see what he is aiming at—he is aiming at the organisation of an anti-Soviet bloc.

Truly, it would have been hard for Doriot to slide more quickly down the slippery slope of treachery.

#### (d) *Comrade Stalin's Declaration*

But what is there in the communiqué broadcast from Moscow after the negotiations with Laval? First of all:

"The representatives of the Soviet Union and of France were able to assure themselves that their constant efforts in all envisaged diplomatic undertakings clearly aimed at the same goal—the maintenance of peace by the organisation of collective security."

This is only the acknowledgment of a fact that I have already explained at length: the Soviet Union's desire for peace, and the desire to maintain peace on the part of imperialist France, because at the moment the latter is not interested in war.

The communiqué continues:

"They (the representatives of the Soviet Union and of France) were completely agreed upon acknowledging—in the present state of the international situation—the obligations of states sincerely attached to the safeguarding of peace. . . . It is particularly incumbent upon them, in the very interest of the maintenance of peace, not to allow their means of national defence to be at all weakened. In this respect, M. Stalin understands and fully approves the national defence policy carried out by France to maintain its armed forces at the level necessary to its security."

#### (e) *Revolutionary Defence*

As for the Soviet Union, no toiler can doubt that it is the essential duty of the Soviet proletariat to organise its security. Defence of the revolution is the first elementary duty of the proletariat in power. Ercoli reminded us of what Lenin wrote on this subject long before the imperialist war. Was it not Jaurès himself, a reformist but devoted to the working class, and a sincere enemy of war, who wrote:

"The people that first enter Socialism will immediately see the frantic reactionary powers hurl themselves upon it. It would be lost if it were not itself ready to take up the sword, to answer shell for shell, in order to give the working class of other countries time to organise and rise in their turn." (*Petite République*, July 24, 1897.)

The need for a workers' and peasants' Red Army, armed and powerfully equipped for modern warfare is obvious to every honest toiler. The bourgeoisie, the French bourgeoisie in particular, is wasting its time in heaping sarcastic comment upon the fact that the Communists of all countries and the French Communists admire the development of the Red Army.

Let us now examine the part of the communiqué that concerns France:

By virtue of the defensive pact of mutual assistance, the Soviet Union lends its great economic and military power to the security of the French people against Hitlerite aggression. The Soviet Union is justified, therefore, in demanding reciprocity from the

French government; without it the pact that it signed would be nothing but a fool's bargain for the toilers of the Soviet Union and the whole world.

The overwhelming majority of the toilers of France has understood that quite well. True enough, it cannot be denied that for a short time the French Party was somewhat troubled. But a few days after the communiqué read by Laval in Moscow, an informatory meeting of 5,000 active members and sympathisers of the Party in five Paris regions unanimously (except for one opposing vote and seven abstaining) approved the line of our Central Committee, which vigorously supported the pact and Comrade Stalin's declaration. What is more, the elections to the General Council took place in the Department of the Seine ten days later. Their results were an endorsement of the peace policy of the U.S.S.R. and the policy of the French Communist Party.

It is precisely because of the extent of the anti-fascist trend in France that there is widespread anxiety in the country in the face of Nazi armaments. The security of the country against the Hitlerite bandits is a dominant preoccupation of the toilers and especially of the middle classes, particularly the very numerous urban petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the intellectuals. And this is all the more so because these sections of the population forget or do not know of the existence of a revolutionary proletariat in Germany, of a Communist Party that lives and fights heroically in the face of a frightful terror.

Now these very important sections of the population see that the great Land of the Soviets, whose leaders have been accused of being bloody destroyers, is intervening to guarantee peace with all its economic and military might. The Soviet Union and its governing Party, the Bolsheviks, now appear to them in a different light.

And naturally enough, the French Communists, likewise still often considered as barbarous destroyers also benefit by this fact.

Hence, the more favourable reception accorded our campaigns and our slogans.

It is obvious that the big bourgeoisie and the French fascists are going to try and are already trying to make use of this situation to endeavour to intensify their nationalist and chauvinist propaganda. It will thus be up to us to redouble our efforts to develop on all occasions both effective solidarity with the German proletariat and the struggle against the Hitler executioners, the allies and counsellors of the French fascists.

For example, in the demonstrations against the swastika flag on German ships we must never forget to demonstrate not merely against the fascist flag, but also for Thaelmann, in order to show the German seamen that it is not they whom we are booing, but the executioners of the German proletariat. (Applause.)

The Soviet Union's political line of peace, outlined and applied by our great Comrade Stalin, thus appears not merely as correct, but as aiding in mighty fashion the rallying of the French toiling masses against fascism. It is rendering a new and inestimable service to the international proletariat.

#### IV. THE ATTITUDE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY

The reactionary bourgeoisie, certain Social-Democratic leaders, and the renegades claim that ever since the pact of mutual assistance there is a contradiction between the policy of the Soviet Union, hence the policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and that of the French Communist Party which is voting against war credits and the prolongation of the term of military service, and is fighting against the militarisation of youth and of the whole civilian population under the pretext of manoeuvres against a gas attack.

What then is the position of the French Communist Party?

We stated it clearly in the appeal that our Central Committee signed this April together with nine other parties, sections of the C.I., from which I quote the following sentence:

"In case of counter-revolutionary war against the fatherland of Socialism, we will support the Red Army of the Soviet Union in every way. . . . We will fight for the defeat of every power that wages war against the Soviet Union."

That is the line that we will follow in every case, and that is why we supported and are supporting the pact of mutual assistance for the defence of peace.

*We French Communists can have no confidence that the bourgeoisie will apply the pact.*

But just because we are and have been ardent defenders of the pact, we have no confidence at all that the French bourgeoisie will apply it, and still less in the present French Cabinet. Is it not stated in the communiqué issued after the negotiations with Laval that:

"The Soviet and French representatives moreover confirmed their resolution to neglect nothing in the course of their collaboration to forward, with the help of all the governments supporting a policy of peace, the improvement of political conditions, which alone can re-establish between peoples the confidence indispensable for the development of the moral and material interests of European solidarity."

Now, the French bourgeoisie is not improving the political conditions for restoring confidence. Quite the contrary. It does not pursue a consistent peace policy. . . . the agreements it signed at Rome have given fascist Italy a free hand in Abyssinia. The assurances given by France are of such a nature that Italy has just withdrawn two divisions from the French Alpine frontier. Now, peace is indivisible. Who does not understand, for example, that a new world war can grow out of war in Abyssinia? Thus, the French bourgeoisie is not pursuing a peace policy internationally.

And the Communists do not intend to renounce the absolute independence of the working class, which we will never lead into the "sacred union."

Moreover, how was the pact signed?

The French government wanted to satisfy two of the deepest aspirations of the toilers of France: love of peace and love of the Soviet Union. The toilers of France are, in fact, passionately following everything that happens in the Soviet Union. They attach an inestimable value to everything that comes from the Soviet Union. They thrill with enthusiasm over the successes of Socialist construction. They manifest their solidarity on every occasion. After the *Maxim Gorky* disaster, for instance, the workers spontaneously collected money in many factories of the Paris region to build a new airplane of the same type, and sent these sums to *l'Humanité* forty-eight hours after the accident, for transmission to the Soviet government. (*Applause.*)

Great French scientists also admire the Soviet Union. They see that in the Land of Socialism the scientists, the seamen and the rescuers of the *Chelyuskin*, the explorers of the stratosphere, are national heroes, whereas in France honours and pensions are reserved for fascist colonels, and the foremost radiologists of Paris hold their consultations in wooden barracks in the hospitals of Paris.

André Marty concludes from this that a solidarity movement of such extent, which comprises all the sections of the population,

has exerted pressure on the governmental circles for collaboration with the U.S.S.R. and for the struggle for peace.

But what guarantees have we that the pact will be put into effect, and that the government will not yield to the attacks of the most chauvinist and most reactionary elements, advocates of union with the Hitlerites?

We have no such guarantees. Moreover, there are many officers who are openly carrying on fascist propaganda in the French army. The soldier-correspondents of *l'Humanité* report such and such a colonel openly calling for joining the Fiery Cross, and such and such officers insulting the Red Army of the Soviet Union in their speeches to the soldiers, and calling for anti-Communist struggle. In a very recent article (*L'Oeuvre* of July 28), the former Air Minister, Pierre Cot, revealed the high army chiefs' fear that in case of trouble officers would draw their units over to fascism, which he said "would evoke and excuse the shift of other soldiers over to the side of the people. . . . The moral disintegration of the army would follow. . . . In this case all mobilisation would become impossible."

What guarantees have we that this army will not be thrown against the workers and peasants in battle to-morrow, as has been the case in Belgium, in Geneva, and in the Asturias? The recent events in Brest and Toulon indicate the contrary. What guarantees have we that it will cease oppressing and martyring the enslaved peoples of the colonies?

None at all. That is why we are voting against the monstrous credits for war, at a time when poverty has never been as great in France for the last thirty-five years.

By means of emergency decrees, the government is squeezing eleven billion francs out of those employed by the state and the big public services, and out of the ex-service men, in order to throw the whole sum thus collected into the war budget.

And nevertheless, it could easily find the necessary credits by the progressive taxation of fortunes of over half a million francs, as our Party demands. This would even follow the traditions of the Great French Revolution, when Thuriot declared in the Convention in 1793:

"Instituting a forced loan from the rich means winning a great victory. Let us force them to devote their wealth to the defence of the Republic."

André Marty concludes from this that the French Communists are persuaded that the bourgeoisie is unable to ensure the security of the country. The latter can only be ensured by the security of the people, by the fusion of the army in the people.

Comrade André Marty continues:

That is why our Party has set as one of its most urgent tasks the conquest of the army for the people, both to prevent its use against it and to ensure the application of the Franco-Soviet treaty of peace.

And I shall conclude my exposé with this question of the conquest of the army for the people.

In the fact of the fascist menace in France—a menace that is growing rapidly—the question “On whose side is the army?” is the subject of considerable controversy at the present time. The fascists—the *Action Française* and the *Croix de Feu* (Fiery Cross), above all—are redoubling their activity to win over the officers and soldiers. And that is one of the most burning questions of the day for the struggle against fascism and the danger of war.

André Marty set forth, *inter alia*: On July 7, in agreement with the organisers of the people's rally of July 14, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France, through its delegate to the anti-fascist assembly of the Paris regions, proposed the establishment of *soldiers' committees for the defence of the constitution and the republic*, in order to check the intrigues of the fascist officers and organisations within the army.

And at the anti-fascist rally in Paris on July 14 last, the Radical deputy Rucart, on behalf of all the organising groups, addressed special greetings to the army, calling upon it not to become “*the instrument of a factional minority and to be the defender of liberty.*”

André Marty then calls to mind the attitude of the Communists towards the capitalist army. The Communists, as Lenin has taught us, and as has been particularly restated by the Thesis of the Sixth Congress of the C.I., are against insubordination, against desertion. They answer the summons to mobilisation *even for a reactionary war*. They enter the army, endeavour to learn well the handling of arms there, to struggle there against chauvinist propaganda.

In the struggle for winning the army for the people, there is a task directly linked up with that: the task of winning the young, whom the fascists and reactionary elements are trying

to win from the school age on by waging a violent campaign against the anti-fascist teachers and professors. Now in France, the great majority of teachers and professors are anti-fascists and union-organised. That is an excellent point of support for all our work of winning the young and hence the army for the people, which we must know how to employ.

Winning the army for the people is the highest guarantee that the French army will not be employed against the people; it is the guarantee that 1918 shall not happen again, when the French army, marching into Germany at the time when the proletarian revolution broke out, dissolved the soldiers' councils, as was the case at Mainz, for instance; it is the guarantee that 1919 will not occur again, with its attacks against the Soviets in Hungary and Russia.

## V. OUR TASK

Such then is our position in the face of the present threats of war, and more particularly, in view of the threat to the Soviet Union.

Of course, we well know that only the final overthrow of capitalist domination will abolish wars. But if we know how to mobilise the masses, we shall be able to retard and prevent an imperialist war, and first of all a military attack upon the Soviet Union.

Preventing this attack, smashing it if it should break out, by assuring the victory of the Red Army, does not mean for the toilers of the whole world, and for those in France particularly, participating in an ordinary anti-capitalist action. The defence of the Soviet Union is the defence of the proletariat's future, of its very life. And that is why we shall do everything we can successfully to assure this defence.

The past gives us the greatest hopes for the future. In the years 1918-20 the toilers of the Soviet Union, the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army repulsed the aggression of fourteen imperialist nations. The heroism of the Red Army, of the partisans, of the Red Guards, was admirable. But all of them learned in the struggle the military technique that they had not known. The arms of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army were often archaic, its means of transport primitive, its commissary intermittent. The enterprises behind the front were almost entirely disorganised by the imperialist war and the civil war. Moreover, industrial equipment was extremely reduced. As for the soldiers, the commanders and the political commissars, like the soldiers of the Year II of the Great French Revolution:

*" They marched along singing, their souls without fear, and their feet without shoes."*

And it was under these conditions that our glorious Red Army defeated enemies ten times its size, a thousand times better armed, the leading armies of the world! Why? Because the tremendous prestige of the October Revolution was shaking capitalism in every country in the world, and as a result, its armies composed of workers and peasants!

And that took place when there were practically no Communist Parties in the capitalist countries! The proletarian revolution, moreover, acted through its prestige rather than by its concrete achievements, which could not yet be manifest. To-day the Soviet Union is a formidable power. To-day the advance of the well-being of the toiling masses liberated there is unprecedented, undeniable and undenied.

To-day our Communist Parties exist in sixty-five countries in the world, Parties many of which have already been tempered in great heroic struggles. To-day a mass movement exists around the French Party, the like of which has not been seen since the Great French Revolution. That is why each Party, and the French Communist Party in particular, faces obligations still heavier than those at the end of the first period of wars and revolutions.

We know that the Red Army will accomplish scientifically and with absolute devotion its duty of defending the country where Socialism is being built. What matters, therefore, is that we, in the capitalist countries, be able to accomplish our heavy, our very heavy tasks, as well.

Armed with the decisions of the Seventh World Congress, enlightened and guided by our great Comrade Stalin, we shall redouble our efforts to correct our weaknesses in the shock tempo called for by the present grave situation, in order to be ready to conquer new positions that will assure new victories for Socialism! *(The delegates rise and applaud furiously.)*